DOINGS OF WHALES.

SEA YARNS SPUN BY AN OLD EX-WHALER OF SOUTH STREET.

Milking She Whales Before Harpooning Them While They Are Asleep on Top of the Water — Whales Very Dangerous When Sleep Mad or Harpoon Mad.

"That's the best reading I've had for many a long day," exclaimed the bronzed old ex-seaman in his dingy little "sailing office" in South street, and his bright eyes twinkled. The reading that pleased him so was the Victoria dispatch giving an account of the attack of an enormous whale on the schooner Mermaid off the Japan coast.

"You don't know what sleep mad is, do you? It's just the kind of mad that big whale had on him, and the same kind of mad that any big whale is sure to get on him when he has just had his dinner and is taking his after dinner nap. The whales of the waters where this schooner Mermaid was cruising are great sleepers. They turn over on their sides on top of the water and let the waves rock them to sleep, especially if they have been dining pretty heavy. They sleep sound, and I have more than once milked a she whale when she was sleeping like that without waking her up, just as you might milk a cow. A good, healthy she whale, with suckling cubs, would give down a barrel of milk, and then we'd have a feast after a hard day's work.

"But suppose that besides being sleep mad this big whale that pitched into the schooner Mermaid had also been harpoon mad. If he had been, The Sun wouldn't have had that story to print, for the schooner or her crew would never have been heard from again.

"Did I ever have any close call from an infuriated whale? Did I? Well, remembering a few of 'em, I think I did! For instance, what would you call this one? Forty years ago I was one of the crew of the whaler Mary Pilgrim of Nantucket. We started in April after sperm whales in the waters around the Cape de Verde islands.

"We picked up a whale now and then, but they were not plentiful, but one day we discovered a tremendous bow head or bone whale asleep close off our port bow. Three boats were lowered. I was the harpooner of the captain's boat, and the mate and second mate were in charge of the other two. We got to the whale without disturbing him, and I gave him the harpoon. That woke him, I can tell you! He was the maddest whale I ever saw, being both sleep mad and harpoon mad. He turned on our boat and came at us with a rush. Instead of striking us head on he passed our bow, and as he was passing struck the boat with his flukes. He cut us square in two and turned the boat bottom side up quicker than ever any boat had been capsized before. My leg became fouled in the harpoon line, and in a second I found myself being towed through the water at about 20 knots an hour and several feet below the surface. The line was wound about my leg just below the knee and had cut deep into the flesh.

"I knew my end was not more than a minute ahead of me unless I got loose from that rushing whale. My knife was in my belt. I got it out, and somehow —but I never knew just how—I managed to reach down and sever the line. The next second I appeared on the surface, popping up in so sudden and startling a manner that I almost scared the mate and his boat's crew into fits, for I came up right alongside of their boat. It seems that just as the whale struck our boat and wrecked it the mate fastened a harpoon in the enraged monster and was being towed by it to the windward, and I had come to the surface just as they were passing that spot. They took me in on the fly, as it were, but I was very little better than dead. The second mate had picked up the captain and the rest of the crew.

"As the whale was tearing along with the mate's boat in tow he discovered our vessel lying to, and making up his mind that there lay the source of all his troubles he turned and charged like a tornado upon it. He hurled himself against the vessel three different times, knocking off the cutwater clear to the wood ends and starting a bad leak. While he was thus engaged the mate's boat got near, and the furious whale turned on it. The mate thrust his lance against the whale's head and threw all his weight upon it as the whale rushed forward, while the crew backed the boat for their lives. At that critical moment the captain, with the second mate's boat, came up. He had a bomb lance and fired it at the whale. The bomb struck the great head of the monster on the bone above the left eye and exploded on the outside, doing no damage except to momentarily stun the whale. He soon recovered and charged on the captain's boat. That boat being free avoided the rush, and then the whale made again for the mate's boat.

"Three different times the captain's boat drew the whale away and saved the mate and his crew. At the fourth time the whale didn't turn aside from his furious rush on the mate, and I thought our fate was sealed. With a less experienced and true handed sailor than our captain it would have been sealed, too, in a very few seconds more. The whale charged right upon us, and his giant flukes were in the air, to swoop down and crush us beneath their mighty and irresistible sweep, but that gave the plucky captain the chance he wanted. He drove the hand lance into the whale clear to its seizing, and the monster fell back in the water between the two boats, neither one escaping by more than a yard.

"The captain's plunge with the hand lance had been true to its mark. Both boats backed away from the struggling whale. He lashed the sea into foam and whirled about in an aimless and bewildered manner. Presently he sent up a spout of water that was red with blood, and a lusty shout went up from a score of throats. Every man knew it was all over with the ugly foe. We had a good two days' work repairing our vessel, but we got 120 barrels of oil and 3,000 pounds of bone out of the whale, and our victory was a great one."—New York Sun.

George was a good boy. He was always willing to take good advice. The teacher told him one day that he should avoid the appearance of evil. George remembered this. When he stole Farmer Clover's apples that night, he saved the cores and dropped them in front of Dick Blatherskate's yard. Dick was a bad boy and got punished for stealing Farmer Clover's apples that night, but George avoided the appearance of evil. He ate the apples. The good are always rewarded in this world and the bad punished.—Texas Siftings.

The Glory of Rome's Prime.

We may still stand on the tower of the capitol and survey that glorious panorama bounded by Tuscan, Sabine and Alban hills and dream what that scene was some 1,700 or 1,800 years ago. The Forum below was one radiant avenue of temples, triumphal arches, triumphal columns, colossal statues, monuments and votive shrines—the senate house, the rostra, the sacred way on the one side; the circular temple of Vesta, the temple of Castor and the basilica of Julius on the other; above on the right the temple of Jove; on the left that of Juno, and the towering palaces of the Palatine and the Circus Maximus beyond the valley. Far as the eye can reach would be vast theaters, enormous baths, colossal sepulchers, obelisks, columns, fountains, equestrian statues in marble or in bronze.

The walls of these sumptuous edifices are all of dazzling brilliance in oriental marbles, bright with mosaic and with frescoes, and their roofs are covered with plates of hammered gold. In the far distance, across terraces and gardens shady with the dark foliage of cypress and stone pine, might be seen the aqueducts which bring from the mountains whole rivers into the city to fill its thousand baths and its hundred fountains. And between the aqueducts and the porticoes, far as the eye can reach to the hills beyond, villas gleam in the sun with their terraces, gardens, statues and shrines, each a little city in itself. This earth has never seen before or since so prodigious an accumulation of all that is beautiful and rare.—Frederic Harrison in Nineteenth Century.

"The Girl I Left Behind Me."

The fame of the song "The Girl I Left Behind Me" is worldwide. No British man-of-war leaves harbor, no British regiment leaves its station for foreign service, without the plaintive air being heard by the men who are leaving and the girls—their mothers, sisters, wives and sweethearts—who are being left behind. This song, like many another that has stirred the British heart at home and abroad, that has given valor in the fight and brought the soft recollections of the motherland amid the horrors of the battlefield, is anonymous.

It is no doubt of Irish origin, but no one can tell who wrote either the words or the music. It has been found in a manuscript dated about 1770. "The air was also taken down," says Bunting, "from A. O'Neil, harper, A. D. 1800, author and date unknown. The air was written for a march, and the English version of the words, called 'Brighton Camp,' differs considerably from these." Chappell, while he put in an English claim to the air, admits that it may be Irish. He thinks it was probably written in 1758, when there were encampments along the coast—at Brighton among the rest—where many tunes of this sort originated. Wherever it was first played, it is now almost a century since it became the soldier's and sailor's loath-to-leave, and it has so long been played on every man-of-war as she weighed anchor and for every regiment as it quitted a town where it had been stationed that an omission would be thought a slight upon the ladies.—Toronto Mail.

Honors to the Victor of Blenheim.

Queen Anne was in her closet one day at Windsor—a little turret chamber with windows on every side looking over the green and fertile valley of the Thames, with all the trees in full summer foliage, and the harvest beginning to be gathered in from the fields—when there was brought to her a scrap of crumpled paper bearing upon it the few hurried lines which told of the "glorious victory" of the battle of Blenheim. It had been torn off in haste from a memorandum book on the field and was scribbled over with an inn reckoning on the other side.

The commotion it caused was not one of unmixed joy, for though the queen wrote her thanks and congratulations, and there was a great thanksgiving service at St. Paul's which she attended in state, the party in power did all that in them lay to depreciate the importance of the victory. When, however, Marlborough appeared in England with his prisoners and trophies—a marshal of France among the former, and many standards taken in the field—the popular sentiment burst all bounds, and his reception was enthusiastic. The crown lands of Woodstock were bestowed upon him as a further reward, and the queen herself commanded that a palace should be built upon the estate at the expense of the crown, to be called Blenheim in commemoration of the extraordinary victory.—Mrs. Oliphant in Century.

A Rare Plant.

A lot of Detroit girls were talking about the young men of their acquaintance, as girls in Detroit and every other town are wont to do, and one they called George seemed to be in their estimation a degree above his fellows.

"Yes," said a blond with lovely brown eyes, "I do think George is nice."

"I should say so," chimed in a sparkling brunette. "He knows more than most of them and isn't so horribly soft—at least not all the time. Indeed I consider him quite deciduous."

"Deciduous?" chimed the crowd. "What do you mean by that?"

"Oh, he isn't evergreen," she said smartly, and the sentiment passed unanimously.—Detroit Free Press.

European Sportswomen.

There are few American women of society who care for wildwood sports, the majority not sympathizing with the tastes of the many foreign women of high position who make notable catches of salmon or return from a day's hunt with a bag of game. Some English girls of title have distinguished themselves as skillful salmon fishers, but it is mostly on the continent that women use the gun. The Infanta Isabel, elder sister of the Infanta Eulalie, is a very successful shot. She heads shooting parties in the royal preserves, and brings down with unerring aim partridges, woodcock, hares and rabbits. She is one of the most daring riders to hounds in the rough country about Madrid.—New York Tribune.

Capital Offenses In Shakespeare's Time.

In England during Shakespeare's lifetime stealing above the value of 12 pence, burning a haystack, killing or stealing a sheep, breaking a dike or bridge, breaking a bank of a fish pond, cutting down a tree in an orchard and the malicious tearing or defacing the garments of a person in the street were all capital offenses.

"You don't see anything like so many trunks with covers on them as you formerly did," said a traveler, "but I have occasionally seen lately something that I don't remember to have seen at all years ago, and that is people carrying handbags protected with covers."

A Return to Capital Punishment.

A great many people think it is pretty bad business for the state to kill a man because that man has killed some one else. They are quite right. It is very bad business, and if any other procedure could be devised capital punishment would be abolished at once.

Michigan has given imprisonment for life a fair trial. No criminal has been executed in that state for nearly 50 years. It was, however, recently voted by its lower house that the death penalty be re-established—that is to say, the policy of leniency has utterly failed, and it is more than probable that Michigan will again resort to the hangman's rope.

The people were startled one day by the news that a life convict had murdered his keeper and made a desperate push for liberty. Then the question occurred to every one at the same moment, "Why shouldn't every life prisoner do the same thing, since under the laws of the state no additional penalty is attached to the crime?"

Such a villain, when caught red handed after a second murder, is no worse off than he was before he killed the keeper. He was in for life anyhow, and when arrested he will be in for life again, but it is the same old life. If he succeeds in escaping, that is so much gain, and if he fails he loses absolutely nothing. The abolition of capital punishment is therfore an almost irresistible incentive to kill a prison official and make a dash for liberty.—New York Telegram.

Distances at the Fair.

To see all that is to be seen and improve all the opportunities it offers will be no summer day's task. One who comes to Chicago expecting to take in these wonders in a day or two or a week will go away regretting that which he must of necessity leave unseen. A month would not exhaust its interest. Perhaps it may be thought this is an overstatement. A few facts and figures will show that it is not. Jackson park, in which the exposition is being held, has a frontage on Lake Michigan of 1½ miles and contains 533 acres, 77 of which are water.

The Midway plaisance is a mile long and 600 feet wide and contains 80 acres more. There are 39 exposition buildings proper, with a floor space of 159 acres. Adding the galleries, there are 199.7 acres. Grouped around there are 44 state and territorial buildings, 18 buildings erected by foreign governments and 40 others for the minor purposes of the management, restaurants and advertising wares and enterprises. In the Midway plaisance are the foreign villages, shops, etc., described in a previous letter.

The visitor who would merely take a passing look at each of the vast array of exhibits must prepare to walk along 124 miles of aisles. Add to this the distances from one building to another, which must of necessity be traveled many times, and the distance to be covered will reach fully 150 miles.—Cor. Pittsburg News.

Betrothal of the Duke and Princess.

The official announcement of the betrothal of the Duke of York, the ultimate heir to the throne, to the Princess May of Teck will be received throughout the country with a subdued approval. The young couple are, it is said, sincerely attached to each other, and we heartily hope the statement, in itself probable enough, is actually true, for the English idea in that respect, though no doubt born of sentiment, has behind it a solid basis of reason.

A prince or princess must occasionally submit to reasons of state, but nevertheless a king without a wife he cares about is a very unhappy kind of being. He rarely comes in contact with other close relatives, who are usually married away all over the world. He can have no male intimate friends—the difference of grade being too violent, and the deep suspiciousness of royalty as to the motive of courtiers' attachment being too incurable—and if he has female friends there is sure to be scandal. A well behaved, honest court is the best security here for the throne, as we have seen all through Queen Victoria's reign, and the best guarantee for that—the only guarantee indeed which works—is that the queen shall be the king's closest friend.—London Spectator.

Trying to Be Polite.

An old man rode up to the door of a Cumberland county postoffice on a gig. As soon as the postmaster spied the visitor he tore around behind the little case of boxes, grabbed a letter and a paper and darted out of doors at the same high rate of speed.

"Here's your mail, Mr. Smith. Little rainy, isn't it? Hope your ground's looking well," etc., until the old man tucked his mail under his leg and drove away.

The postmaster saw fit to explain a little when he came back. "That's one of the old seed Democrats of this town, and"—with a burst of confidence—"it always pays to be polite to them kind. I don't know as it will amount to anything, but it don't cost a cent, and," continued this rural diplomat, with a wan smile, "there ain't any signs of a new postmaster being appointed yet." All of which indicated the state of suspense of the fourth class postmasters in this devoted country.—Lewiston Journal.

Uselessness of Parliamentary Debate.

The actual unimportance of debate in a legislative assembly, so far as influencing votes goes, is strikingly illustrated by the action of the British house of commons on the home rule bill. There have been weeks of debate, participated in by the greater as well as the lesser leaders of both parties, and yet when the vote was taken it was exactly along party lines. The division was precisely what it would have been if not a word had been spoken.—Boston Journal.

It is said that five minutes after the cyclone that struck Cisco, Tex., several weeks ago, spreading death and destruction in its path, the moon was shining down upon the ruins from a perfectly clear sky, and the shrieks of the wounded and the moans of the dying could be heard everywhere.

In Ashantee parricides are tied hand and foot to stakes driven in the ground near a large ant hill. The ants are then irritated by sticks thrust into the entrance of their dwellings, a guard is set at a respectful distance to prevent rescue, and the prisoner is left to be eaten up.

Dillson—There's a man who never fees a waiter, but slips a half every time into his own pocket instead. He has bought a house and lot with five years' accumulations!

Stillson (shivering)—Gad! I'll bet that house is haunted!—Club.